

RHODESIELLA PLUMIGERA (LOEW, 1860) (INSECTA,
DIPTERA). PROPOSED SUPPRESSION BY USE OF THE
PLENARY POWERS. Z.N.(S.) 2146

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The purpose of this application is to avoid confusion in the common, predominantly Old World tropical genus *Rhodesiella* Adams, 1905 (synonyms: *Macrostyla* Lioy, 1864, preoccupied; *Meroscinis* de Meijere, 1908). The confusion stems from the close similarity of a noun *plumiger* and an adjective *plumigera*, each a valid name denoting distinct species within *Rhodesiella*.

2. The name *plumiger* was published in the binomen *Chlorops plumiger* Meigen, 1830: 153 for a species from Central Europe. The specific name *plumiger* was clearly used there as a noun in apposition, because Meigen consistently treated *Chlorops* as of feminine gender, as shown by the numerous specific names that he published in combination with it (*nitida*, *notata*, *ornata*, *palposa*, *anthracina*, etc.).

3. Generic names ending in *-ops* have been variously treated as either masculine or feminine, but a decision of the Congress has ruled that they are to be uniformly treated as masculine (*Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 31: 81, amendment to Art. 30a(i)(2), 1972). However, even when *Chlorops* is treated as masculine, the epithet *plumiger* must be treated as a noun under a decision that if such a name could be either a noun or an adjective (in this case the masculine form of a *-ger*, *-gera*, *-gerum* adjective), it is to be treated as a noun in apposition (*Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 31: 81, amendment to Art. 30(i), 1972).

4. The name *plumigera* was published as *Oscinis plumigera* Loew, 1860 for a species from South Africa ("Caffraria"). The name *Oscinis* is feminine, and *plumigera* is the proper adjectival form.

5. Under the International Code, at least at present, the names *plumiger* and *plumigera* in the genus *Rhodesiella* are not homonyms, even though they are of the same origin and meaning, because they differ by one letter (Art. 57d) in a way that is neither a difference of termination due solely to gender (Art. 57b(i)) nor a set of variable spellings considered to be homonymous (Art. 58). Perhaps the Code should add differences of this kind (the *-fer* and *-ger* nouns and adjectives) to the list of variable spellings in Article 58.

6. There is already confusion in the literature of this family. Several European authors (e.g., Macquart, 1835: 599; Zetterstedt, 1848: 2597, 2655; Duda, 1932: 33) changed Meigen's *plumiger* to the feminine adjective *plumigera*, the first two authors in *Oscinis*, the last in *Macrostyla*. I do not regard this change to the feminine gender termination as being an emendation in the meaning of the Code. However, the Code's definition of an emendation as "any demonstrably intentional change" should surely make allowances for the normal operation of the rule that an adjectival species-group name "must agree in gender with the generic name with which it is at any time combined, and its termination must be changed, if necessary" (Art. 30). If *plumigera* of Macquart et al. were interpreted as a true emendation, it would preoccupy Loew's *plumigera* and this application would be unnecessary, but that interpretation seems to me an unwarranted extension of the meaning of emendation.

7. In spite of the use of *plumiger(a)* Meigen and *plumigera* Loew in various combinations, the latter was never replaced, probably because the two were considered to be synonymous. Now that they are considered to be distinct species, I have found that *Rhodesiella divergens* (Malloch, 1931), originally described in *Macrostyla*, is a synonym of *plumigera* Loew and can be used as a replacement name. However, because this synonymy is subjective, I do not believe that the name *divergens* should be added to the Official List, where it might obstruct any future revisionary change.

8. In order to avoid confusion, the International Commission is requested to exercise its plenary powers:

- (1) to suppress the name *plumigera* Loew, 1860, as published in the binomen *Oscinis plumigera*, for purposes of both the Law of Priority and the Law of Homonymy; and
- (2) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *plumigera* Loew, 1860, as published in the binomen *Oscinis plumigera*.

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